Preparatory Committee for the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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The United States remains committed to the goal of the 1995 NPT Review Conference Middle East Resolution to promote a zone that is free of weapons of mass destruction. To achieve this goal, the U.S. has focused on three priorities: 1) Supporting efforts to end violence and promote political negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians; 2) Ensuring that states are in compliance with their NPT obligations; and 3) Encouraging all states in the region to join the NPT and adhere to other international nonproliferation treaties and regimes.

1. Support for Middle East Peace Efforts

Achievement of a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace in the Middle East remains a key U.S. foreign policy goal. All NPT parties support the goal of a region free from weapons of mass destruction. It will not happen without the achievement of a political settlement that provides safe and secure borders for the parties involved. NPT parties have recognized that efforts toward the goal of universal adherence to the NPT should include the improvement of regional security in the Middle East. The United States, European Union, United Nations and the Russia Federation, referred to collectively as the Quartet, worked together to develop the Road Map to realize President Bush's vision of two states -- Israel and Palestine -- living side by side in peace and security. The United States remains committed to the Road Map, the two-state vision, and negotiated settlement.

2. Ensuring Compliance with NPT Obligations

The Middle East poses a significant challenge to the nuclear nonproliferation regime. During the 2003 meeting of the Preparatory Committee, the United States expressed strong concern regarding non-compliance with the Treaty. There is little hope of establishing an agreement to create a regional zone free of weapons of mass destruction if we cannot ensure that nations of that region implement and uphold existing agreements to which they are parties. Ensuring compliance is our highest NPT priority. All NPT parties need to act with resolve in response to non-compliance issues. It is clear

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from recent events in the Middle East that NPT parties need to be vigilant against those who would abuse their rights under the Treaty to pursue "peaceful" nuclear programs to hide their real pursuits. Some have claimed allegiance to the NPT while acquiring sensitive nuclear technologies, maintaining nuclear weapon ambitions, and pursuing clandestine nuclear capabilities.

Non-compliance issues have been addressed in Iraq, where a dictatorship that violated the most basic rights of its people and its solemn nonproliferation commitments is gone and where the Iraq Survey Group continues its efforts to find and understand Iraq's WMD and prohibited missile programs. In the Transitional Administrative Law signed on March 8, the Iraqi Governing Council reaffirmed the commitment of the Iraqi people to Iraq's nonproliferation obligations and treaties.

Iran's nuclear program is at the forefront of Middle East compliance concerns. Public disclosures in 2002 of several clandestine Iranian nuclear facilities helped launch a rigorous, ongoing IAEA investigation into Iran's noncompliance with its safeguards obligations. IAEA Director General ElBaradei has issued four reports over the past year to the Board of Governors regarding Iran's covert nuclear activities. These reports confirm, in striking detail, what is now publicly known about Iran's 18-year history of clandestine nuclear activity. This activity includes undeclared uranium enrichment and plutonium reprocessing activities, pursuit of advanced P-2 centrifuge designs, experiments with uranium metal and polonium - both important nuclear weapons components - and willful and systematic efforts to hide these activities from the world. There is no doubt that for at least 18 years, Iran has been in serious violation of its NPT obligations.

The IAEA's investigation and verification work in Iran continues in an effort to address many unresolved issues. We anticipate another report from DG ElBaradei before the next Board meeting in June to provide further information on Iran's nuclear activities and to verify whether Iran is meeting its pledge to suspend all enrichment-related and reprocessing activity. The continued effort by Iran to pursue a nuclear weapons capability represents an unacceptable security threat to the world community, a fundamental challenge to the NPT, and a major roadblock to prospects for a WMD-free zone in the Middle East. Iran should abandon its policy of deception and take all necessary steps to permanently and verifiably abandon its nuclear weapons-related efforts.

On December 19, Libya pledged to eliminate its nuclear weapons program, declare all of its nuclear activities to the IAEA, and allow immediate inspections and monitoring to verify these actions. The United States and the United Kigdom have been working closely with the IAEA to help Libya fulfill its commitments. Libya's cooperation thus far has been excellent and virtually all declared equipment directly associated with Libya's nuclear weapons program has been removed from Libya – including nuclear weapons design and fabrication documents, advanced P-1 and P-2 centrifuges and components, and a large quantity of equipment associated with the centrifuge program. Highly enriched uranium fuel has been removed from the Libyan nuclear reactor at Tajura and transported to Russia as part of an international effort now underway to convert the reactor to less proliferation-sensitive low enriched uranium fuel. The joint U.S./UK efforts have been undertaken in close

coordination with the IAEA, which has been present on the ground in Libya to observe U.S./UK removals, to inspect certain materials, and to place some specific items under seal.

Libya was found in noncompliance with its safeguards agreements by the IAEA Board of Governors on March 10, and this fact was reported to the United Nations Security Council. Because of the dramatic steps Libya has been taking to address these violations, however, the Board reported them to the Council for information purposes only, in the expectation that this progress will continue. The Security Council expressed its appreciation for Libya's decision in its April 22 Presidential Statement. As President Bush has made clear, Libya's renunciation of WMD is a crucial turning point along the path toward rejoining the international community. The United States is very pleased with Libya's success to date in fulfilling its December 2003 commitments, and believes that the "Libyan model" of WMD dismantlement is rapidly becoming a compelling international benchmark for other proliferators to emulate, and a signal victory for the NPT regime as a whole.

3. Universality of the NPT and Other Efforts to Strengthen Nonproliferation Treaties and Regimes

The United States continues to promote a regional environment that encourages broader acceptance by all Middle East states of international nonproliferation and disarmament norms. Promoting universal adherence to the NPT is crucial to this effort. Under Article IX of Treaty, current non-NPT parties may accede to the NPT only as non-nuclear-weapon states. U.S. law and policy continue to prohibit the supply of significant nuclear assistance to non-nuclear weapon states that do not accept IAEA safeguards on all of their nuclear activities. Current non-NPT parties do not meet this requirement and thus are ineligible to obtain significant nuclear supply from the United States. We also strongly promote other nonproliferation goals including:

- ratification and implementation of IAEA full-scope safeguards agreements;
- entry into force and full implementation of IAEA Additional Protocols;
- accession to the Chemical Weapon Convention;
- accession to the Biological Weapon Convention and support for effective BWC implementation procedures; and
- adherence to Nuclear Supplier Group guidelines, Missile Technology Control Regime and Australia Group and Wassenaar Agreement guidelines; and
- subscription to the International Code of Conduct Against Ballistic Missile Proliferation.

In addition, the United States continues to urge supplier states, both bilaterally and in international fora, to refrain from exporting any equipment and technology related to WMD and their delivery systems to countries in the Middle East, especially those that support terrorism. The United States again joined the international community last fall in adopting without a vote an UNGA resolution supporting the establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone in the Middle East. Clearly, the regional

political situation would not currently permit the negotiation of such a treaty, but it is a measure of the U.S. commitment to a Middle East free of WMD that we support this resolution.

In an important speech on February 11, President Bush made a number of proposals designed to strengthen barriers against proliferation. Several of these initiatives have direct relevance to strengthening the global nonproliferation regime including the NPT. If adopted, they would measurably reduce the risk of WMD proliferation in the Middle East and elsewhere. Collective action of this type can assist in reducing access to WMD-related materials and in disrupting the purveyors of destruction. All civilized nations must understand the importance of cooperation in dealing with these grave challenges to our security. A strong commitment to nonproliferation by all nations of the Middle East, along with the resolve to tackle the complex political issues that divide them, is the only formula that can ultimately remove the specter of WMD from the region.